Customer No.: 31561
Application No.: 10/707,632
Docket No.: 12398-US-PA

AMENDMENT

In the Claims:

Please amend the claims as follows.

Claims 1-6 (canceled).

Claim 7. (currently amended) A method of fabricating a semiconductor device, comprising the steps of:

providing a substrate having at least a film layer, an optical isolation layer, an anti-reflection coating and a photoresist layer sequentially formed thereon, wherein the optical isolation layer has a light absorption coefficient sufficient to block light through the anti-reflection coating incident thereon;

performing a photolithographic process to pattern the photoresist layer so that a portion of the anti-reflection coating is exposed; ~~and~~

patterning the anti-reflection coating, the optical isolation layer and the film layer to form an opening in the film layer;

removing the patterned photoresist layer and the anti-reflection coating;

forming a material layer over the substrate covering the optical isolation layer and completely filling the opening; and

performing a chemical-mechanical polishing operation using the optical isolation layer as a polishing stop layer to remove the material layer over the optical isolation layer.

Claim 8. (previously presented) The method of claim 7, wherein the step for patterning the anti-reflection coating, the optical isolation layer and the film layer

comprises performing an etching operation using the patterned photoresist layer as a mask in which the film layer has an etching rate greater than the optical isolation layer.

Claim 9. (currently amended) The method of claim 8, wherein the patterned photoresist layer and the patterned anti-reflection coating are ~~also~~ removed ~~in~~ after the etching operation.

Claim 10. (previously presented) A method of fabricating a semiconductor device, comprising the steps of:

providing a substrate having at least a film layer, an optical isolation layer, an anti-reflection coating and a photoresist layer sequentially formed thereon;

performing a photolithographic process to pattern the photoresist layer so that a portion of the anti-reflection coating is exposed;

performing an etching operation using the patterned photoresist layer as a mask to pattern the anti-reflection coating, the optical isolation layer and the film layer to form an opening in the film layer, wherein the film layer has an etching rate greater than the optical isolation layer;

removing the patterned photoresist layer and the anti-reflection coating;

forming a material layer over the substrate covering the optical isolation layer and completely filling the opening; and

performing a chemical-mechanical polishing operation using the optical isolation layer as a polishing stop layer to remove the material layer over the optical isolation layer.

Claims 11-16 (canceled).

Claim 17 (canceled).

Claim 18. (previously presented) The method of claim 7, wherein the optical isolation layer has a light absorption coefficient greater than 1.8.

Claim 19. (currently amended) The method of claim 7, wherein the optical isolation layer comprises a polysilicon ~~conductive~~ layer.

Claim 20. (previously presented) The method of claim 7, wherein the optical isolation layer comprises a metallic layer.

Claim 21. (currently amended) The method of claim 7, wherein the optical isolation layer comprises tungsten ~~an organic layer~~.

Claim 22. (currently amended) The method of claim 7, wherein the optical isolation layer comprises aluminum ~~an inorganic layer~~.

Claim 23. (previously presented) The method of claim 10, wherein the optical isolation layer has a light absorption coefficient greater than 1.8.

Claim 24. (currently amended) The method of claim 10, wherein the optical isolation layer comprises a polysilicon ~~conductive~~ layer.

Claim 25. (previously presented) The method of claim 10, wherein the optical isolation layer comprises a metallic layer.

Claim 26. (currently amended) The method of claim 10, wherein the optical isolation layer comprises tungsten ~~an organic layer~~.

Claim 27. (currently amended) The method of claim 10, wherein the optical isolation layer comprises aluminum ~~an inorganic layer~~.

Claim 28. (currently amended) A method of fabricating a semiconductor device, comprising the steps of:

providing a substrate having at least a film layer, an optical isolation layer, an anti-reflection coating and a photoresist layer sequentially formed thereon, wherein the optical isolation layer has a light absorption coefficient greater than 1.8;

performing a photolithographic process to pattern the photoresist layer so that a portion of the anti-reflection coating is exposed; ~~and~~

patterning the anti-reflection coating, the optical isolation layer and the film layer to form an opening in the film layer;

removing the patterned photoresist layer and the anti-reflection coating;

forming a material layer over the substrate covering the optical isolation layer and completely filling the opening; and

performing a chemical-mechanical polishing operation using the optical isolation layer as a polishing stop layer to remove the material layer over the optical isolation layer.

Claim 29. (previously presented) The method of claim 28, wherein the step for patterning the anti-reflection coating, the optical isolation layer and the film layer comprises performing an etching operation using the patterned photoresist layer as a mask in which the film layer has an etching rate greater than the optical isolation layer.

Claim 30 (canceled).

Claim 31. (currently amended) The method of claim 28, wherein the optical isolation layer comprises a polysilicon ~~conductive~~ layer.

Claim 32. (previously presented) The method of claim 28, wherein the optical isolation layer comprises a metallic layer.

Claim 33. (currently amended) The method of claim 28, wherein the optical isolation layer comprises tungsten ~~an organic layer~~.

Claim 34. (currently amended) The method of claim 28, wherein the optical isolation layer comprises aluminum ~~an inorganic layer~~.